2: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1945
FE11 Tallensi FE11

lineal kin of both parties. One of the best-remembered fights of this kind broke out between Gorogo and Wakii in the very year that the British appeared on the scene of Tale life. It occurred in circumstances that made it a mystical calamity which these two clans are still expiating.

On the day that marks the climax of the *Gɔlib* Festival, all the Talis and thousands of non-Talis from the rest of the country congregate on the summit of the Tong Hills for a great ritual dance. It is in the main a dance of the men of the Hill Talis clans. They come up and dance in clan contingents, wearing festive garb and carrying their weapons. The tumult is indescribable. The throngs of spectators, men, women, and children, milling backwards and forwards, the rhythmic thud of stamping feet, the harsh lilt of the choruses pulsating against the babel of the crowd, the shimmer of sweating bodies and gaudy attire, the ritual officers in their finest skins and black caps, the swift, snake-like convolutions of the dancers, all this makes a scene of thrilling excitement. The taut bodies and tense expression of the dancers show that they are keyed up to the highest pitch of enthusiasm; and as they dance in separate clan contingents, an intense feeling of clan unity and pride is created in each group.

Each clan contingent accompanies its dancing with choruses for which new verses on topical themes are made every year. And the point of most of these songs is the superiority of that particular clan to all other people. There is a strong feeling of rivalry between the various clan contingents, which grows keener and keener as the day advances. The old men say that careful watch must always be kept lest any of the young men start fighting. For though there is a ritual truce on all forms of strife throughout Taleland during *Gɔlib*, passions are easily inflamed during the dances.

These were the circumstances in which the fight between Gorogo and Wakii took place. The two contingents were dancing near each other. The Gorogo men sang, defiantly, '(We are like) the adder, woo! If others wish to, let them tread on its tail and see'. The Wakii contingent flung back '(We are) a beehive, woo! If others wish to, let them touch us and see'. The dancing became more furious and the two groups drew nearer and nearer each other. And then, suddenly, they clashed. In the mêlée several men were killed and many wounded before the tendaanas and men of other clans could separate them.

Bloodshed during *Gɔlib* is a dreadful sacrilege; bloodshed on Tenzugu on the day of the most important ceremonies and during the dancing is a religious enormity that cannot be compared to anything else in the Tale calendar of sins. The people of Gorogo and Wakii atoned for their sacrilege by the sacrifice of many cattle and sheep to the Earth, but they have not yet freed themselves of its consequences. The Earth still exacts the toll of death after death from the sons and grandsons of the original sinners. No reprisals were taken by either clan and their relations with each other were not affected by this fight.

Such fights could not develop into general wars because they took place between clans that are closely linked together by ties of clanship or ritual collaboration, or are connected through an intercalary unit that

3: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1949
FE11 Tallensi FE11

vanity apart, they do require ample storage-room for the large quantities of clothes, the saddlery and trappings of their horses, the innumerable odds and ends of European origin, and many articles of native production which they have accumulated by purchase or gift. Their good fortune is exceptional. Others content themselves with small and modest private rooms. Leatherworkers and blacksmiths also often have private rooms where they keep their tools and the materials of their craft.

No special provision is made for young children or girls. They live in their mothers' rooms. An unmarried young man usually has a special room of his own, essentially a sleeping-room (*doo*), in his mother's *dug*; and if there are several adolescent boys in a family a *doo* may be built for them in one of the women's *dugət*.

The construction of the dwelling-house shows graphically the division of the domestic family into two complementary spheres. On the one hand, we have the sphere in which the patricentral *yir* predominates; on the other, that in which the matricentral *dug* has priority. It is the line of cleavage between descent from the father (*ba dɔŋam*) and descent from the mother (*ma dɔŋam*), principles which are antithetical in form but complementary in function in the domestic organization. Maternal origin supplies the canon of differentiation within the family, paternal descent the principle of integration. In the polygynous joint family, which is the natives' ideal domestic unit, the constituent *dugət* are relatively autonomous in relation to one another, and in certain respects even mutually opposed. The *yir* combines them into a single integral unit, but they are not swallowed up; they retain their specific identity according to maternal origin. The *yir*, then, is the complementary factor to the *dug*; it is also the synthesis of a group of *dugət* at a higher level of organization. This, as has been shown in our previous book, is both the structural model and the social matrix of the lineage system.

The Developmental Cycle of the Joint Family

We have found it convenient to fix our analysis of the Tale homestead by reference to the simplest kind of independent domestic unit. But the elementary family, as we have already remarked, is neither the ideal nor the most common type of independent domestic unit in Taleland; for the typical substratum of a domestic group is not the individual breadwinner but an effective minimal lineage.[1] The domestic group grows, changes, and dissolves with the growth cycle of this lineage, and a particular elementary family is only an episode in this cycle. The structure of the Tale family cannot be divorced from its existence in time. We have to examine it as a process. At any given time we find domestic families at every stage of development in a Tale community.

[1] Cf. p. 9 above for a definition of this unit. A full analysis of its constitution is given in *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. xii.